

# *Spirit of Grace* ELCA UMC



March 10th, 2024  
*Fourth Sunday in Lent*

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Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Lent calls us to journey, this and every day,  
following Jesus wherever he leads us.

**Lent calls us to journey:  
to the place where God covenants with us,  
to receive the new names we are given.**

Lent calls us to worship together,  
to tell future generations the good news.

**Lent calls us to practice justice,  
to bring God's hope to all people.**

Lent calls us to faithful living,  
to trust the One who gives us life.

**Lent calls each of us to take up our cross,  
to trust the One who bears it with us.**

Lent calls us to journey with God.

**Let us worship God, who walks with us,  
this and every day.**

## Confession & Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who writes the law on our hearts,  
who draws all people together through Jesus.

**Amen.**

Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin  
in the presence of God and of one another.  
*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God,  
**we confess that we are caught in snares of sin  
and cannot break free.  
We hoard resources while our neighbors  
are hungry and cold.  
We speak in ways that silence others.  
We are silent when we should speak up.  
We keep score in our hearts.  
We let hurts grow into hatred.  
For all these things and for sins only you know,  
forgive us, Lord.**

**Amen.**

Beloved Siblings in Christ, here is a flood of grace:  
Out of love for the whole world,  
God draws near to us,  
breaks every snare of sin,  
washes away our wrongs,  
and restores the promise of life through ☩ Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

Opening Hymn

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light  
*UMH 206 – verses 1-3*

## Greeting & Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the power of your love casts out our fears, and shows us the path towards your promised life of abundance and freedom for all people. When fear feels like it is the only true thing, remind us that you are our way, our truth, and our light. In the name of Christ, our teacher and guide, we pray.

**Amen.**

## Scripture Acclamation

*Words of life, words of hope  
give us strength, help us cope.  
In this world where e'er we roam,  
ancient words will guide us home.*

*Ancient words, ever true  
changing me and changing you.  
We have come with open hearts.  
O let the ancient words impart.*

## First Reading: Numbers 21:4-9

The Israelites traveled from Mount Hor along the road to the Sea of Reeds in order to avoid Edom. But the people grew impatient along the way, and they addressed their concerns to God and Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? We have no bread! We have no water! And we are disgusted with this terrible food!"

Then YHWH sent venomous snakes among the people. They fatally bit many of the people. So the people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against YHWH and against you. Intercede for us, and ask that God remove the snakes from us."

So Moses prayed for the people. And YHWH said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it on the end of a pole. Anyone who is bitten and looks at it will live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then whenever the people were bitten by a snake, they looked at the bronze snake and lived.

Word of God, Word of Life

**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (from Nan C. Merrill's *Psalms for Praying*)

We give thanks to You, who are the Source of Love;  
whose Light shines forth throughout the universe!  
**Come, awaken our hearts that we might do your Work;**  
**For, without You, we can do nothing;**  
**'tis your Love that loves through us.**

O, that you might learn to see with your heart,  
to hear and think with your heart, as well!  
**Many there are who boast of their own deeds,**  
**who are proud of their power over others.**  
Where will they be when storms arise,  
when earthquakes shatter the rocks of their hearts?  
**Only the humble will call to the Spirit**  
**to help them in times of distress;**  
The wise wait not for trouble,  
but communicate with the Counselor in all things.  
**Enter the Holy Temple of your heart,**  
**and learn to still the tumult of the mind;**  
For, to be serene even in the midst of chaos,  
is to know the efficacy of calmness.  
**Peace dwells in the heart of silence,**  
**compassion and mercy abide there as well.**  
Come, let us give thanks to the Heart of all hearts,  
giving praise for the unlimited gifts of Love!

Gospel Reading: John 3:14-21

The Holy Gospel according to John the 3rd chapter:

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,  
so the Chosen One must be lifted up,  
so that everyone who believes in the Chosen One  
might have eternal life.  
Yes, God so loved the world  
as to give the Only Begotten One,  
that whoever believes may not die, but have eternal life.  
God sent the Only Begotten into the world  
not to condemn the world,  
but that through the Only Begotten  
the world might be saved.  
Whoever believes in the Only Begotten avoids judgment,  
but whoever doesn't believe is judged already  
for not believing in the name  
of the Only Begotten of God.  
On these grounds is sentence pronounced:  
that though the light came into the world,  
people showed they preferred darkness to the light  
because their deeds were evil.  
Indeed, people who do wrong hate the light and avoid it,  
for fear their actions will be exposed;  
but people who live by the truth  
come out into the light,  
so that it may be plainly seen  
that what they do is done in God.

Word of God, for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Miranda Bermes-Goller

Hymn of the Day

What Wondrous Love is This  
*ELW 666 – verses 1-4*

## Affirmation of Faith: A New Creed

*Please stand as you are able as we confess our faith in God together:*

**We are not alone  
we live in God's world.  
We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others  
by the Spirit.  
We trust in God.  
We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our redeemer and our hope.  
In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## Joys & Concerns

*If you have any joys, concerns, or prayer requests to share, please type them into the comment section of the livestream so that we may lift them up together as a community.*

## Prayers of the People

Trusting in God's promise to reconcile all things, let us pray for the church, the well-being of creation, and a world in need.

*A brief silence.*

Gracious God, your love unites. Give vision to the global church and foster cooperation in mission. Increase inter-religious understanding and ecumenical dialog. Make your church a sanctuary for all fleeing persecution, disaster, and war.

*We pray to you especially in this time of genocide in the Holy Land. Lead us in the way of solidarity with the oppressed. Use our voices to speak out against injustice. Heal the hurt and harm, console the bereaved and afflicted, protect the innocent and helpless, and deliver all who remain in peril.*

God of grace,

**Receive our prayer.**

Creating God, your love enlivens. Restore balance to the earth's fragile habitats. Preserve wilderness lands, rainforests, and wildlife. Cleanse oceans and rivers. Make us good stewards of the earth.

God of grace,

**Receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, your love liberates. We give thanks for those who courageously witness to your liberating love. Free all people from the evils of racism, religious strife, and hatred.

God of grace,

**Receive our prayer.**

Merciful God, your love heals. Care tenderly for all whose loved ones perished from pandemic disease in every nation. Strengthen health care workers, first responders, and caregivers. Relieve all who live with chronic illness and pain.

God of grace,

**Receive our prayer.**

Incarnate God, your love enlightens. Open our hearts and minds to fresh understandings of our faith. Deepen our love for you and for one another. Teach us to pray for our enemies.

God of grace,

**Receive our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## Offering

*At this time, if you are willing and able, please consider giving to Spirit of Grace Church to support our ongoing ministry. Checks can be mailed to 1140 Tucker Road, Hood River OR, 97031. Online Donations can be made through the link below:*  
[Spirit of Grace Church](#)

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of Abundance  
you are the giver of every good gift,  
and all that blesses us comes from you.  
Receive that which you have first given us,  
strengthen us to your service,  
and send us out into the world  
that we might be filled with  
the power of the Holy Spirit  
and raised to new life in Christ.  
**Amen.**

Gathered together by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us, using the language you are most familiar with - the language of your heart.

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**



Sending Song:

Canto de Esperanza (Song of Hope)  
*TFWS 2186, sung twice through*

Blessing

Beloved Siblings in Christ,  
we are God's own people,  
holy, washed, renewed.  
God bless you and keep you,  
shower you with mercy,  
fill you with courage,  
and ☩ give you peace.  
**Amen.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. The Spirit of God is alive in you!  
**Thanks be to God!**



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**Church Office Hours**

**Closed on Fridays**  
**Pastor Miranda Bermes-Goller**  
M-Th 9-1, or by appointment  
[spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com](mailto:spiritofgracepastor@gmail.com)  
**Linda Boris, Pastoral Assistant**  
Tuesday 10-1

Attributions

Call to Worship: written by Thom Shuman, and posted on Lectionary Liturgies.  
<http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.ca/>

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